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ABSTRACT

The first section of this manual provides background on storytelling and the importance of storytelling for children, describes the essential elements of the storytelling process, and discusses the place of storytelling in the schools. Language arts and creative skills developed by storytelling are also identified. Guidelines for choosing a story, techniques for learning the story, and tips on telling the story are presented in the second section. The third section offers suggestions for developing a storytelling program and on how public library staff can set up storytelling visits in the schools. Lists of resources on storytelling, sources for good stories, and resource centers for storytelling are included. (MES)

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Spinning Stories: An Introduction to Storytelling Skills

Vicky L. Crosson

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Library Development Division of the Texas State Library

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An Introduction to Storytelling Skills

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Austin, Texas
August, 1988

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SECTION I

WHAT IS STORYTELLING?
WHY DO CHILDREN NEED STORIES?
THE STORY PROCESS AND THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

WHAT IS STORYTELLING?
WHY DO CHILDREN NEED STORIES?

Storytelling is one of the oldest art forms. Through the telling of stories the wisdom, strength and values of a people are expressed and passed to new generations. Storytelling is a method for relating everyday events by highlighting the significance of what we may overlook as being trivial or unimportant. A story helps us organize information into logical patterns thus allowing us to put events in a structure or framework which helps us record our history.

Before the written word became accessible to the masses of people, storytelling was the avenue for dispersing news, recording events, guarding the values of a culture and providing entertainment. The storyteller functioned as the gatekeeper to the information the society needed, whether for political news or enjoyable entertainment. Storytellers held a revered position in their societies and became known as bards in Wales, shenachies in Ireland, meistersingers in Germany, minstrels in England and skalds in Iceland and Scandinavia.

In today's constantly changing world, we need the life-affirming power of stories more than ever. Our children receive a view of the world as a highly negative place torn by war, pollution, drugs and the threat of nuclear destruction. Storytelling can provide reassurance that an adult can understand how it feels to be a child. By sharing good stories about heroines and heroes we can offer positive role models to our children. Many children have limited exposure or access to nonthreatening listening contacts with adults. Telling stories is an excellent vehicle for building these contacts and allowing social exchange to occur..Storytelling can be a very personal experience. There are no barriers between the teller and the listener. Books, props and costumes are put aside--the story becomes the link between the teller and the listener.

When children listen to stories they must create their own mental pictures of the setting, the characters and the action. Unlike television, with its preconceived images, storytelling offers children the opportunity to visualize the stories using their imaginations. Every child will envision Jack (of the beanstalk fame) as different and so, too, will each child's picture of the giant be unique. The children will be actively participating in the story and not just receiving another programmed version of the Saturday morning television variety.

Storytelling can also offer children the opportunity to hear wonderful literature before they are able to read it for themselves. The exploits of Robin Hood or Tom Sawyer intrigue children who love adventure, but may not be ready or able to read books. By hearing stories, the motivation to continue reading may strike some children. New vocabulary also may be learned by these listeners. Children with reading difficulties need not be denied exposure to our literary history if they can hear the stories. The listening experiences will enrich the language experiences of these children.

In a world inundated with information, the ability to process and accurately assess information is a valuable tool. Businesses spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on seminars and training workshops on building listening skills which will help employees utilize the information more effectively. Storytelling provides listening opportunities for children and gives practice in processing the action of a story and assessing the story's intent. This need not be initiated by an adult or teacher, but should occur as a natural part of the storytelling experience.

In the article that follows more attention is given to the importance of the storying process and how storytelling can be employed to teach the essential elements of reading, writing, speaking and creative thinking in the school curricula. This information should be useful to both school and public librarians when justifying the inclusion of storytelling for programming in and

out of the library setting.

THE STORYING PROCESS AND THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

By Jay Stailey

INTRODUCTION

With great complexity and speed the world of education is hurtling toward the 21st century. Massive reform has taken place in recent years. With the coming of age of a world-wide technological society, America's place as the world economic power is being challenged by other countries. Leaders from the local to national levels are demanding that education prepare our youth to retake the leadership in world productivity. Research continually demonstrates the role of strong instructional leaders in making schools effective and efficient. Academically focused children will become workers, technicians and leaders of the United States in the coming century. How does storytelling fit in the formula for the future? Will we avert misfortune or even disaster if we can only remember the story? I think in many ways storytelling can play a legitimate and crucial role in our schools.

THE POWER OF STORY

Norma Livo and Sandra Rietz in their textbook, STORYTELLING: PROCESS AND PRACTICE, address just exactly what "story" is. Livo claims that "story" is its own reality. "It is a configuration in memory that is quite independent of the specific details of any given event." People readily recognize what is "story" and can easily distinguish that which is told to them is a storied format from that which is not. How we know and remember information, and how we store and recall information is involved in the patterning that is "story". It is a process that is at once ancient and yet fluid in its response to the present, matching stride for stride the development of human

memory and language. It is a way of organizing thought and placing it into language. It is of particular interest to educators that even very young children shape language and ideas into "story" forms.

The concept of story is one of organizational and archetypal dimensions. Individual stories may have different patterns or shapes, yet each is a subpattern or subshape of the overall structure that is recognized as story. Livo notes that the notion of "story" is regenerative; it is the archetypal master framework from which all stories derive. The human brain recalls the details of a given happening and reconfigures them into the conceptual framework of a story. By placing a circumstance or happening into this archetypal framework (of story), the human brain brings coherence and sensibility to the event itself. It is by this process that isolated and unconnected pieces of human experience are "sewn together" into something that is complete and has meaning.

Placing information into the framework--"storying" as Livo and Rietz call it--helps us to better remember the events. The stretching of the information onto the framework can distort certain aspects of the event. This process brings a higher level of comprehensibility to the happenings in our lives. Our private lives become a part of a greater "human experience" and we "story" information. James Hillman felt that this process helps us join with others emotionally and intellectually, and generates a sense of rightness and belonging. Livo and Rietz feel that storying is a vehicle for transcending time, for binding people together with the future, the past, and one another, for extending commonality of experience, and for ordering events to make existence more sensible and meaningful.

Memory retention specialists have keyed in on the mental process of retention framework in recent years. It is now believed that the vast majority of the stimuli data received by the brain at any given moment is "dismissed" or falls out of memory within <u>one second</u>. That which remains goes through a process of "trying on"; that is, being placed on a framework of individual relevance. What does not

fit is cast aside during the next five seconds. What fits on the framework then has an opportunity to flow into the short term memory. Madeline Hunter has outlined six factors that determine whether learning is transferred from short term memory to long term memory. These factors are meaning, practice, modeling, positive transfer, feeling tone and the degree of original learning. It is the first of these that the concept of "story" most parallels. Placing the information in long term memory is only a part of the intellectual process that is language and communication. The brain must not only process and store information, it must be able to recall the information, as well. The brain's filing system is not well understood, but everyone has been faced with that helpless feeling of "knowing we know" information--a name, a place, a word--but not being able to recall it. We can almost see microscopic filing clerks racing through our long term memory, jerking open file drawers, frantically searching for the right file. It is known that novelty (the vividness of a detail), emotion (strong feelings about a detail), discrepancy(something that stands out as being out of place or out of the ordinary) and command (detail that one has to remember) all play a role in the ability of the brain to find information on command from long term memory. Since it is the call of educators to promote the placement and recall of information into and out of the long term memory of the learner, storying can be used as a powerful factor in the process of learning.

STORYTELLING IN THE SCHOOL

Why should storytelling have a place in the educational process? How can storytelling be a valuable asset to education? What is it about storytelling that can impact the educational process? A number of specific characteristics carry over from the discussion in the first part of this article.

The 1979 Nobel Prize for Science was awarded to a group of neurologists whose work concentrated on the differing roles of the left and right hemispheres of the brain. Their research noted that the left hemisphere controls cognitive functions. The right hemisphere, which controls the creative processes, was found to be the center for our understanding of right and wrong. The right side of the brain also contains our concept of the spiritual dimension. We can easily see the implications for education in the public school curriculum.

In past years our society has called on our schools to look after the cognitive (left-brain) growth of our children. The development of the creative right side of the brain has more often been addressed by the immediate family, the extended family, the church and other structured and unstructured experiences in the lives of the children.

During the past several decades, we as a nation have experienced a diminishing impact of both the immediate and extended family, the church and organizations like scouting, etc. in the lives of our children. At the same time the schools have continued in their role as developers of the left side of the brain. Recent studies of school curriculum, essential elements and actual classroom teaching have revealed that from ninety to ninety-five percent of teaching activities address the cognitive side of the brain. Storytelling can facilitate cognitive learning by placing information to be learned on a relevant framework. This framework can be stored and recalled easily in the left side of the brain.

Storytelling also can help address higher level thinking that facilitates the imaginative process upon which our values and beliefs are built. Specifically, storytelling addresses many of the essential elements for teaching English as identified by the National Council of Teachers of English in 1982. These essential elements, given below, were identified as contributing to the "knowledge, understanding and skills of those who will make up the society of the future". The areas of literature, speaking, listening, reading, writing and creative thinking can be successfully implemented through storytelling.

Storytelling enhances the study and enjoyment of literature through which students can:

*realize the importance of literature as a mirror of human experience as reflected by human motives, conflicts and values;

*identify with fictional characters in human situations as means of relating to others;

*become aware of important writers and familiar with the masterpieces of literature;

*develop effective ways of talking and writing about varied forms of literature;

*experience literature as a way to appreciate the rhythms and beauty of the language;

*develop habits of reading that carry over into adulthood.

Storytelling helps students in speaking, as they learn to:

*speak clearly and expressively about their ideas and concerns;

*adapt words and strategies according to varying situations and audiences;

*participate productively and harmoniously in both small and large groups;

*present arguments in orderly and convincing ways;

*interpret and assess various kinds of communication, including intonation, timing, gesture and body language.

Hearing stories told helps students build important listening skills that allow students to learn:

*that listening with understanding depends on determining a speaker's purpose;

*to attend to detail and relate it to the overall purpose of the communication;

*to evaluate the messages and effects of mass communication.

Storytelling contributes to reading development in that it can help students:

*learn to approach reading as a search for meaning;

*develop the necessary reading skills to comprehend material appearing in a variety of formats;

*learn to read accurately and make valid references;

*learn to judge literature critically on the basis of personal response and literary quality.

Storytelling also can contribute to writing by helping students learn to:

*write clearly and honestly

*recognize that writing is a way to learn and develop personally, as well as a way to communicate with others;

*generate ideas for writing, find appropriate modes for expressing them, select and arrange ideas, evaluate and revise what they have written;

*adapt expression to various audiences;

*use techniques of writing for appealing and persuading others;

*develop their talents for creative and imaginative expression.

Finally, and beyond the area of language arts, storytelling promotes creative thinking. The storytelling process can serve as a valuable tool in teaching students that:

*originality derives from the uniqueness of the individual's perception, not necessarily from an innate talent;

*inventiveness involves weaving new relationships;

*creative thinking derives from their ability not only to look, but to see; not only to hear, but to listen; not only to imitate, but to innovate; not only to observe, but to experience the excitement of fresh perception.

It is clear that the storytelling process has numerous applications and immeasurable value for educators as they facilitate the process of learning for their students.

Sources used in this article:

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Special thanks to Jeannine Pasini Beekman, President of the Houston Storytellers Guild and to Elizabeth Ellis of Dallas.

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SECTION II

HOW TO CHOOSE A GOOD STORY TO TELL
TECHNIQUES FOR LEARNING A STORY
TIPS ON TELLING THE STORY

HOW TO CHOOSE A GOOD STORY TO TELL

Read, read, read, A beginning storyteller will do well to select folk tales.

Choose a story that appeals to you and has meaning for you.

Look for a story that presents its message in the best possible way. The story should give the child something to grasp and keep.

The story should present positive values without being didactic.

Identify a story that:

*has a well-defined theme

*has a clearly defined plot (crisp beginning, action/conflict development, resolution, brief ending)

*has a simple construction

*creates anticipation

*has believable characters

*uses repetition (words and phrases that clue the listener into the development of the story)

*uses particular speech patterns (not accents but a way of phrasing a thought)

*has dramatic appeal to children

Select a story which will be appropriate for the age group to which you are telling.

AVOID CHOOSING STORIES WITH:

-LONG, COMPLEX DESCRIPTION OR DIALOGUE

-AN UNCLEAR ENDING OR RESOLUTION

-CONTROLLED VOCABULARY

-LONG SECTIONS OF PHILOSOPHY OR STREAM OF CONSIOUSNESS SOLILOQUY

-COMPLICATED PLOTS AND SUBPLOTS

-A STRUCTURE THAT DOES NOT ADHERE TO THE STORY STRUCTURE OF THE CULTURE (Most western European stories have 3 points to the story, whereas Native American stories involve 4.)

TECHNIQUES FOR LEARNING A STORY

Read the story you've selected several times.

Analyze the story--think through the action of the story.

Retell the story in your own words.

Underline sentences that highlight the action of the story.

Think about what you want the story to say--what is the meaning of the story. (A good story stands alone without a lot of explanation by the teller.)

Shape the atmosphere of the story by thinking about the setting and the characters. Consider how the characters might feel. Think through how each character makes the story move. What is the mood of each character--is the character loud, soft, happy, sad, etc.

Look for distinctive phrases or expressions. (Let this wording add flavor to the story rather than using a dialect or accent that is not natural for you.)

Either write or type the story in your own words or make an outline of the story. (If you keep a storyfile in a notebook or on notecards, you will have a list of your repertoire and be able to refresh your memory quickly.)

You might want to use visualization techniques to help you learn the story. An explanation and sample of blocking and mapping follows this discussion.

You also might try using an auditory method of learning.

*taping the story (Don't be surprised if you sound different on tape than you think you sound, everybody does!)

*reading the story aloud (Use your typed or handwritten version.)

*listening to recordings of stories by other storytellers (Remember, you should make the story unique to your experiences and perceptions)

Commit the beginning and the ending of the story to memory. This will help you move into and out of your story with ease.

Tell the story aloud and time it, then read it aloud and time it. If the time varies too much you may by leaving something out or telling it too fast.

Practice, practice, practice. If you have a supportive friend or spouse practice with them.

Concentration and love of your story are the central components of good storytelling. Always remember it is the STORY the audience should remember, not the teller.

BLOCKING

Blocking is a term used in the theater for outlining the action of the actors and actresses on the stage. In storytelling, blocking can be used to outline the action of the story's characters. This can help you learn the sequence of the story. When you know the general sequence of the story learning the specifics becomes easier. The following is an example of blocking using THE THREE BILLY GOATS GRUFF.

THE THREE BILLY GOATS GRUFF

-3 goats are eating, small, middle-size, large

-smallest goat decides to cross bridge

-smallest goat gets halfway across bridge

-troll pops out and threatens to eat smallest goat

-smallest goat pleads for freedom and suggests middle-size goat much bigger and tastier

-troll relents

-smallest goat crosses bridge and munches on the luscious green grass

-middle-size goat decides to cross bridge

-middle-size goat gets halfway across bridge

-troll pops out and threatens to eat middle-size goat

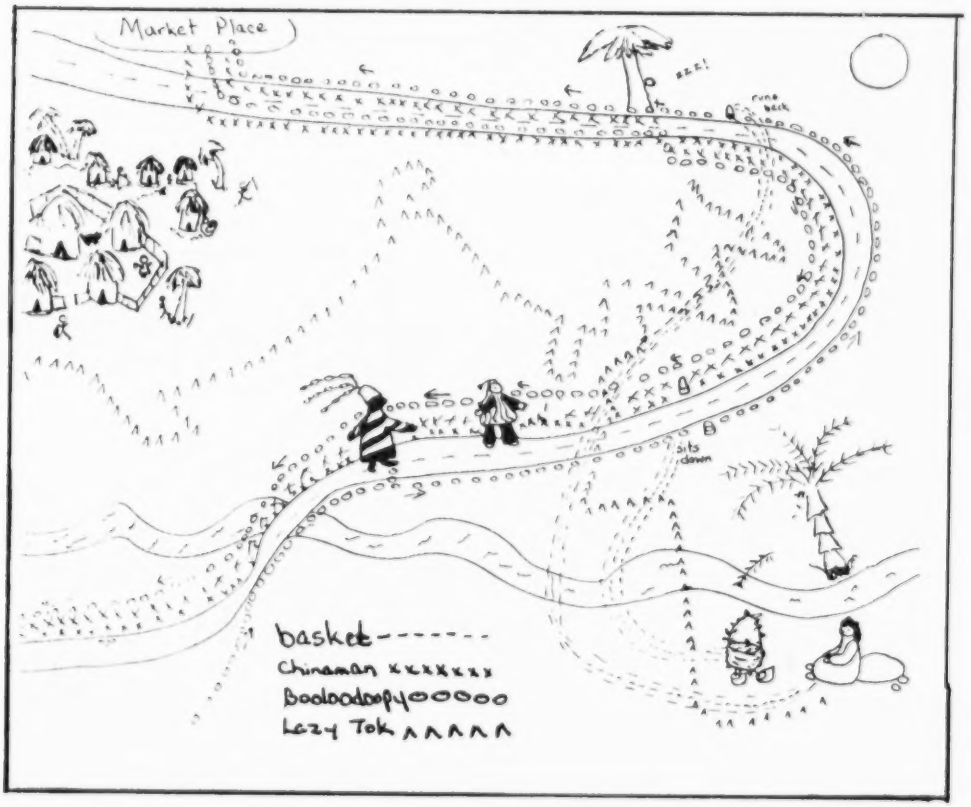
-middle-size goat pleads for freedom and suggests largest and oldest goat much bigger and tastier

ETC.-continue outlining the plot until the story ends.

MAPPING

Mapping is a technique which will help the teller visualize the setting, characters and the action of the story. The teller is literally drawing a map of the story from beginning to end. Once a story is mapped, remembering the story becomes much simpler. and identifying with the story's characters is accomplished with greater clarity. The teller can draw the story using simple stick figures or plan an elaborate map with lots of details. The following is a simple map for the story of LAZY TOK, a tale from Borneo, from the STORYTELLER'S CHOICE by Eileen Colwell.

LAZY TOK



MAKING A STORY BOARD
FOR
LAZY TOK

Tok was too lazy to cry
Tok grew lazier and lazier
"Tok! Tok!"
"Break off one of my branches..."
"Would you like to know how to get food without doing any work?"
"Weave me into a basket"
"Too much trouble... Couldn't you weave your self into a basket?"
"And so the branch wove itself into a basket."
"Tok! Tok! Would you like to know how to get food with out doing any work?"
"Pick me up and set me by the road."
"Too much work..."
"And so the basket did."
A fat chinaman came walking down the road.
Home

TIPS ON TELLING THE STORY

1) Locate a comfortable and relaxed area for telling. Make sure the temperature and ventilation in the room are pleasant.

2) If possible, set the seating up in a semi-circle with you the teller standing or sitting at the front of the room. Make sure there is not a bright light behind you or the audience will be squinting throughout your program.

3) Breathe deeply as you prepare to tell. Breathe from your diaphragm, this facilitates projection of your voice and produces a richness and depth in the sound of your voice.

4) Enter the room or storytelling area with confidence. Stand straight with shoulders held back and chin lifted. You will be centering yourself and helping to control nervousness; breathing will be easier as well.

5) Establish eye contact with your audience. Make sure the audience is ready before you start.

6) Don't forget to pace the telling of your story. Use pauses to enhance the impact of the story and employ timing (speeding up or slowing the pace) to build anticipation.

7) Vary the tone of your voice. You need not give each character a different sounding voice, but let your voice indicate the depth or breadth of the characters. Remember a high-pitched voice can be irritating and a low-pitched voice may be difficult to hear.

8) Use only gestures that will enhance the story and feel natural to you.

9) Employ the vocabulary of the story. Stay away from inserting colloquialisms not apart of the story's culture.

10) If you forget to tell an important piece of the story, pick a convenient stopping place say--"now long ago it happened that..." or "Did I tell you that..."--and relate the information or event as though it belonged in just that part of the story.

11) Let your facial expressions help you tell the tale.

12) Enjoy the story, the children will pick up on this and reflect this feeling.

*A note about disruptive behavior--use eye contact to pull the disrupters back into the story. Insert the names of troublemakers into the story while looking them straight in the eyes. Move toward the child or group creating the disruption and tell to them for a minute or two. If the behavior continues, stop the telling and inform the disrupter(s) that their actions will have to cease. Tell them if you have to stop again, they will be required to leave. A few poorly behaving children cannot be allowed to ruin the storytelling experience for the entire group.

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WHEN TELLING STORIES AVOID

* Beginning with an apology. If problems exist with the room, try to alleviate them and then proceed. If you know your story well enough and have practiced telling it, do your best and the audience usually will tune out any background problems

* Overly long introductions to the story. Use the introduction to prepare the audience for the story and to set the mood of the story.

* Getting sidetracked. Stick to the storyline and do not make extraneous additions to the story.

* Playing with jewelry, clothing or hair. Plan your appearance to enhance your telling, not distract from it. Practice before a mirror and watch where your hands are and see if your body movements are distracting or jerky.

* Talking down to children. Treat them as honored guests and they most likely will respond in kind.

* Beginning to talk immediately after finishing your story. Allow a minute or two of silence. The children will be soaking up the story and need time to move back into reality. Remember you are taking your listeners on a journey, as the guide you need to be sensitive to the needs of the audience.

* Leaving your listeners without the resolution of the story's conflict. Not all stories end happily, but all stories should have a satisfying conclusion. It is unfair to leave the listeners in emotional turmoil or suspended in mid air.

* Telling a story you don't really like or is not worth learning.

SECTION III

HOW TO DEVELOP THE STORYTELLING PROGRAM
HOW PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF CAN SET UP STORYTELLING VISITS IN THE SCHOOLS

HOW TO DEVELOP THE STORYTELLING PROGRAM: Putting It All Together

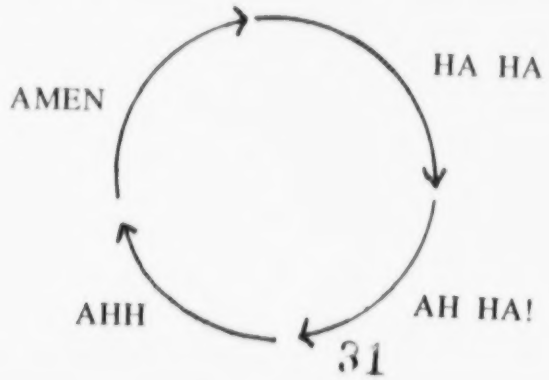
Every storytelling program should maintain a balance of rhythm, mood and intensity among the stories told. Establishing a structure for each program magnifies the continuity of the listening experience. The program's structure also will help the storyteller move through the program with greater ease. Start with an introduction to the program. You may choose a symbolic opening--playing a music box to set the mood for the stories--or, begin by introducing yourself and move into your first story. If you play a musical instrument you might sing a song that will lead you into the first story. You might choose a traditional opening such as from the Asanti tribe in Africa, "A Story, A Story...Let It Come, Let It Go". You should experiment until you create a program with which you are comfortable. Suggestions for building an effective program follow.

Begin with a 30 minute program and increase to a 45 minute program when you are ready.

Vary the length of the stories you will tell.
- -try one short story (5-10 minutes)
- -follow with a longer, pithier story (15-20 minutes)
- -finish with another shorter story (5 minutes)

Tell a variety of types of stories.
- -balance the program by using humorous stories and serious stories

Elizabeth Ellis, a well-known storyteller residing in Dallas, suggests using a circular structure when creating your storytelling program.



HA HA story--begin with a humorous story, e.g., a noodlehead story, a tall tale or a brer rabbit story.

AH HA! story--follow with a story that has a twist or is a "gotcha" story, e.g., a ghost story, a pourquoi story, an origin tale or a parable.

AHH....story--then share a story that leaves the audience with a sigh of satisfaction, e.g., the myths or romance tales.

AMEN story--finish with a story that says "so be it" or "that's the way it is" This is usually a short story with good closure, e.g., the teaching tales, Native American stories or Jewish tales. This story should be life affirmative.[1]

Beginning with a funny story helps the storyteller build rapport with the listeners; a bond develops which will allow the teller to move into more serious and meaningful stories. There are times, however, when the audience is not ready to move into a deeper realm, the teller must be aware of this and share stories with respect for the listeners' needs and abilities.

In Augusta Baker's and Ellin Greene's book, STORYTELLING: ART AND TECHNIQUE, the authors suggest using three stories. "The first story should catch the children's fancy; the second story may ask for a more thoughtful response or be more moving emotionally; the third should be easily comprehended and satisfying".[2] Baker and Greene propose separate storytelling programs for different age groups, e.g., 5-7 year olds, 8-10 year olds and 11 and up.

If you are telling to a mixed age group, make the first selection a story with broad appeal but aimed at the younger children, e.g., THE FOOLISH FROG by Pete Seeger or THE SEVEN RAVENS by Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm. Then tell the main story and then end the program with a short humorous story. If the main story for the older children is beyond the intellectual grasp of the younger children, tell the younger ones they may leave after the first story is told.

The storytelling program should flow. Move from one story to another by using poetry, brief anecdotes, chants, music or riddles and jokes. Whatever you choose match it with the mood of the story you will be telling.

Close the program with a tie-in to your introduction (close and put away the music box), tell a traditional chant or saying, recite a poem or simply say "thank you for coming". Let the children savor the unique experience of the storytelling program. Let the children ask you questions if they so desire, but leave inquiry to them. The stories, if chosen with care and told with respect, will speak for themselves.

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[1]Workshop presented by Elizabeth Ellis and Jeannine Beekman at the Texas Storytelling Festival, March 25, 1988.

[2]Baker, Augusta and Ellin Greene. *Storytelling: Art and Technique*. New York: R.R. Bowker Co., 1987, p. 108.

HOW PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF CAN SET UP STORYTELLING VISITS IN THE SCHOOLS

Schools are wonderful places to tell stories. The children are there already and usually situated in groups that are of a manageable size. Most children are thrilled at the prospect of a break from classroom routine and welcome visitors with great excitement. To assure an enjoyable experience for you and the children, do a little planning before setting up your school visit.

Decide which group(s) of children to whom you want to tell stories. For beginning storytellers small groups are recommended. Intimacy is more easily established and you need worry less about voice projection, eye contact and stage fright. You may want to visit every grade level or select a specific grade or student population. If you visit every grade remember you'll need a repertoire of stories for many age levels. Decide where you would prefer to tell stories: the school library, individual classrooms, the auditorium, etc. The cafeteria and gymnasium will always be noisy; a more controlled and intimate environment is more conducive to listening and concentrating.

Beginning storytellers may want to tell one story to each grade level and spend 5-10 minutes promoting the Public Library and the Summer Reading Club. This is a good way to practice telling tales before you develop a more extensive repertoire.

When you are ready to set up your school visits:

1) Contact the school librarian and introduce yourself.

2) Explain your idea for a school visit.

3) Briefly extol the educational benefits of storytelling.

4) Relate which grade(s) you would like to visit and what type of setting in which you feel comfortable telling. (Request the presence of the teacher or librarian in the room while you are telling).

5) Suggest a tentative date and time or ask the school librarian to contact you after checking with the principal and the school's calendar.

6) Follow the conversation with a letter stating the information covered in your conversation.

7) Two days before the visit, contact the school librarian and verify the times, setting, etc.

8) On the day of the visit, take a nametag, books that relate to the stories you are telling and any other PR materials.

9) Be sure and check in at the school office. Most schools require visitors to sign in and out.

10) Don't forget to introduce yourself to the children. Have fun and enjoy the visit.

11) After any school visit, grab a few minutes and send a thank you note to the school librarian and a carbon copy to the principal.

Library Development Division of the Texas State Library

SECTION IV

SOURCES AND RESOURCES ABOUT STORYTELLING

A SELECTED LIST OF RESOURCES ABOUT STORYTELLING

THE ART OF THE STORY-TELLER by Marie Shedlock. New York: Dover, 1951.

Marie Shedlock's influence on the development of storytelling in American public libraries cannot be overemphasized. She shares her philosphy about storytelling in this classic work and includes practical information about choosing and telling stories. Listed are stories Miss Shedlock found particularly good for telling, including some of Andersen's stories which she was such an expert at telling.

CHILDREN'S FACES LOOKING UP: PROGRAM BUILDING FOR THE STORYTELLER by Dorothy de Wit. Chicago: American Library Association, 1979.

Basic information about storytelling is provided in this practical and readable work. The author includes information about developing the storytelling program and provides sample programs with specific themes. The annotated bibliography is a wonderful source for locating stories from many different cultures.

CREATIVE STORYTELLING: CHOOSING, INVENTING, AND SHARING TALES FOR CHILDREN by Jack Maguire. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1985.

A masterful guide book on building the child's imagination and self-image through storytelling. The origins and traditions of storytelling are explained as well as the different types of stories that exist. Techniques for mastering and revising stories for telling also are shared. If you have a yen to create your own stories to tell, Maguire relates ideas that will help you.

CREATIVE USES OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE by Mary Ann Paulin. Hamden, CT: Shoe String/Library Professional Publications, 1982.

While not exclusively for use in oral storytelling, Paulin's chapter, "Using Riddles, Magic, Jokes and Folk Themes," is a rich source of materials to use as a part of a storytelling program. Telling riddles and jokes can be a good way to introduce a story or idea. Noodlehead or numskull stories also are covered as well as folktales using numbers, e.g., THE THREE WISHES or THE SEVEN RAVENS.

HANDBOOK FOR STORYTELLERS by Carolyn Feller Bauer. Chicago: American Library Association, 1977.

There are excellent ideas in this work for planning the storytelling program from publicity to performance techniques. The section containing storytelling sources is especially helpful for beginners. Poetry and non-narrative sources for storytelling are also offered.

JUST ENOUGH TO MAKE A STORY: A SOURCEBOOK FOR STORYTELLING by Nancy Schimmel. Berkeley, CA: Sister's Choice Press, 1984. (revised edition)

A basic text on learning and telling stories. Several stories are included, some using origami. A list of stories is presented which Schimmel and her storytelling partner have told successfully. There is a wonderful annotated bibliography of folktales with heroines.

ONCE UPON A TIME: A STORYTELLING HANDBOOK by Lucille N. Breneman and Bren Brenemen. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1983.

The presentation of a story is emphasized with an entire chapter on bodily action and control. How to work with an audience is presented including a brief discussion about costumes and appearance. Selections from "John Henry" and other tall tales are included.

STORYTELLING by Ruth Tooze. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1959

An outstanding resource tool for the beginning storyteller, this book offers twenty stories to tell and a brief section of ballads and poetry. The bibliography is extensive and provides examples of folk tales from many countries.

STORYTELLING: ART AND TECHNIQUE by Augusta Baker and Ellin Greene. New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1987. (2nd edition)

This work not only gives you excellent information on the background of storytelling and learning and telling stories, but groups stories according to age groups. A chapter on program planning is practical and applicable. Also, beneficial is a section on basic sources for locating many genres of stories. This is a valuable resource and is both easy to read and use.

STORYTELLING: PROCESS AND PRACTICE by Norma J. Livo and Sandra A. Rietz. Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1986.

A most extensive exploration of the storytelling process is presented in this text. The authors discuss storying and story memory in great detail. The section which covers working with audiences is very informative. Nonstory material--games and songs--also are included. "Planning and Arranging Storytelling Events" is an indispensable section.

TELLING STORIES TO CHILDREN by Sylvia Ziskind. New York: H.W. Wilson Company, 1976.

The author discloses tips on selecting a story, learning a story and mastering the presentation of the tale. Ziskind includes a chapter on using poetry in the storytelling program as well as a chapter on using fingerplays and folk tales to introduce creative dramatics to young children.

THE WAY OF THE STORYTELLER by Ruth Sawyer. New York: Viking, 1962.

A classic work in the storytelling field, Sawyer examines storytelling as a folk-art with amusing anecdotes laced with her philosophy of the art. Favorite stories for telling are included in their entirety and the bibliography provides an excellent coverage of materials for building a good background in folk literature.

A FEW ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

To find variants of folktales and motifs use:

THE STORYTELLERS SOURCEBOOK: A SUBJECT, TITLE, AND MOTIF INDEX TO FOLKLORE COLLECTIONS FOR CHILDREN by Margaret MacDonald. Detroit, MI: Gale Research Company, 1982.

INDEX TO FAIRY TALES 1942-1972: INCLUDING FOLKLORE, LEGENDS AND MYTHS IN COLLECTIONS compiled by Norma O. Ireland. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1973.

INDEX TO FAIRY TALES 1973-1977: INCLUDING FOLKLORE, LEGENDS AND MYTHS IN COLLECTIONS compiled by Norma O. Ireland. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1985.

To locate good stories start with:

BEST-LOVED FOLKTALES OF THE WORLD by Joanna Cole
New York: Doubleday, 1982.

CHILDREN AND BOOKS by Zena Sutherland and May Hill Arbuthnot.
Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1986. (7th edition)

FAVORITE FOLKTALES FROM AROUND THE WORLD edited by Jane Yolen. New York: Pantheon, 1986.

JUBA THIS AND JUBA THAT by Virginia Tashjian. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1969. Also, WITH A DEEP SEA SMILE.

LISTEN! AND HELP TELL THE STORY by Bernice Carlson. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1965.

STORIES: A LIST OF STORIES TO TELL AND TO READ ALOUD by the New York Public Library, many editions available.

A STORYTELLER'S CHOICE by Eileen Colwell. New York: Henry Z. Walck Inc., 1965.

THE STORY VINE: A SOURCE BOOK OF UNUSUAL AND EASY-TO-TELL STORIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD by Anne Pellowski. New York: Macmillan, 1984.

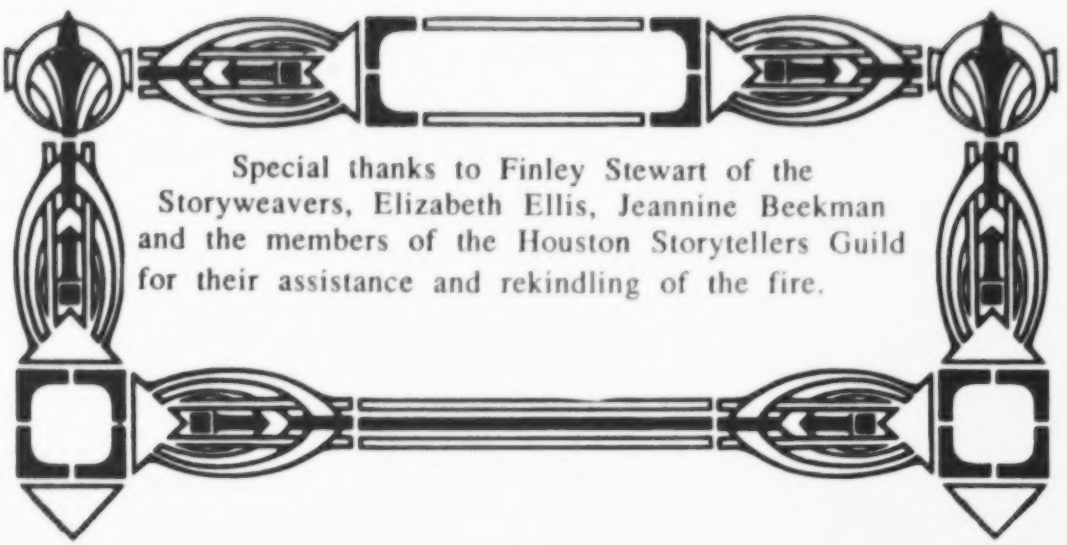
TWENTY TELLABLE TALES by Margaret MacDonald. New York: H. W. Wilson, 1986.

RESOURCE CENTERS FOR STORYTELLING

NAPPS (National Association for the Preservation and Perpetuation of Storytelling)
P.O. Box 309
Jonesborough, TN 37659
(615) 753-2171
Publications: YARNSPINNER/monthly; THE NATIONAL STORYTELLING JOURNAL/quarterly
Conferences: The Storytelling Festival/annually/October; Summer Institute/May-June; National Congress/June
Membership: $25.00/annually/individual
$30.00/annually/institution

National Clearinghouse for Information on Storytelling
Dr. Constance Mellon
Dept. of Library and Information Science
East Carolina University
Instructional Media
Greenville, NC 27834
Publication: BY WORD OF MOUTH/quarterly newsletter
Membership: $5.00/annually

Tejas Storytelling Guild
Box 441
Krum, TX 76249
(817) 565-1968
Publication: TEXAS TELLER/quarterly
Membership: $15.00/annually
Festival: Texas Storytelling Festival/annually/March or April.
Contact: Finley Stewart (817) 565-1968.



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